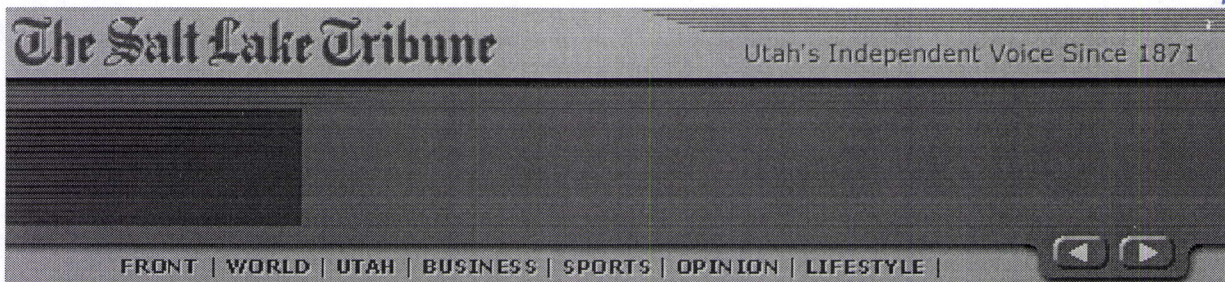


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Expansion of Parleys Canyon Quarry on Hold in Wake of Judge's Order

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It is business as usual on Harper Contracting's 11-acre limestone quarry in Parleys Canyon, but a judge's order has curtailed mining on 50 additional acres -- for now.

To overcome the legal hurdle to expansion, the Kearns-based company must seek a zoning change or reapply to Salt Lake County for a conditional-use permit to replace the one 3rd District Judge Sandra N. Peuler voided last week.

In the meantime, work on the original 11 acres -- under a still-valid permit -- continues while the company and county planners evaluate what Peuler's ruling means to operations at the quarry about two miles up the canyon.

"We are still waiting to hear back from the county," said Harper attorney Joe Rust.

While Harper is waiting, environmentalists say they will be watching to make sure workers do not resume operations on the 50-acre enlargement.

"We will try to make sure no damage is done," said Dave Carrier, a member of Save Our Canyons, the group that filed the civil suit against the county to halt the expansion.

Harper began enlarging the site by 50 acres after securing county approval last August. But now the judge has killed its conditional-use permit, so the company has no legal authority to continue expanding the quarry. Assistant District Attorney Tom Christensen, who defended the county in the suit, says he is still weighing an appeal of the court's decision.

If Save Our Canyons succeeds in permanently shutting down quarry expansion, Christensen said, its efforts could backfire. He says Harper Contracting is required to rehabilitate the quarry to a forestlike setting if the expansion takes place. "Now Harper doesn't have to do that," Christensen said. "We can't force the benefits for the expansion if there is no expansion."

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